

House Passes HR 3585, the Solar Technology Roadmap Act

October 22, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC—Today, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) voted for, and the House passed, H.R. 3585, the Solar Technology Roadmap Act, to strengthen the American solar technology industry through a coordinated research and development program and public-private partnerships.

"While the House has taken a number of steps this year, such as this, to retool our Nation's economy and make it more efficient and sustainable, for major investment and reform to happen the Senate must follow suit and pass this bill, the Wind Energy Research and Development Act (which passed the House in September), and, most importantly, meaningful climate change legislation and do it soon," said Congressman Sestak. "Additionally, we need a strong federal renewable energy standard, like the one included in H.R. 890, of which I am a co-sponsor, and of which an amended version was included in the House-passed climate change bill. Just as H.R. 3585 will generate private investment in solar technology, we need a strong, long-term national policy that encourages public and private investment to create jobs and spur investment in a cleaner and more sustainable economy. This bill is another step in keeping the United States in a position of global economic leadership."

Congressman Sestak has highlighted recent advances in renewable energy with a series of initiatives, including:

A visit to the Westtown School in Westtown, PA as they "plugged in" a new solar panel funded through support of the economic stimulus bill;

Support of a federal appropriation to conduct a study to place solar panels on a former landfill in Lower Providence Township and increased geothermal capacity at West Chester University;

A visit to a wind farm in New Schuylkill County, which is expanding thanks to federal legislation;

Holding an event with a local entrepreneur who started his own renewable energy business in the 1990s, sold to a foreign investor due to a lack of domestic support, and then, earlier this year after recent policy changes and indications of renewed domestic support for renewable energy, made the bold decision, with fellow American investors, to risk stepping out again on his own; and

A visit Philadelphia Community College to talk about the need for more support for program, such as the college's, to educate and train employees for the developing green economy.

The bipartisan Solar Technology Roadmap Act would require the Secretary to select a group of experts from industry, academia, and government researchers to develop a long-term roadmap to guide solar energy research. The Roadmap Committee, at least one-third of which must come from the private sector, would identify the research, development, and demonstration (RD&D) activities needed to improve the performance and reliability of solar technologies, decrease cost, and reduce water use. The Committee's recommendations would direct a growing percentage of federal solar R D&D funding over time.

The bill would authorize over \$2 billion in new research partnerships and demonstration projects for solar energy technologies.

"Establishing a research roadmap and prioritizing federal funding for solar energy research through this bill will help bring new "Made in America" solar technologies to the world market and create new public-private partnerships to make this clean, renewable energy source more

affordable and accessible for all Americans," said Congressman Sestak.